

1: Herskovitz

SV3 Haiti SV3

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[For information on the curing and magical functions of the hungan, see also category 793.]

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WHAT IS "VOODOO"?

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a stream, there to remain until, becoming impatient, it demands to be taken out. A ceremony then brings back the tortured soul and makes of it a "*los nan canarie* — a *los* in a jar" — which thereafter acts as a guard for its family.

There is little agreement as to the place of residence of the *los*. In general, it is believed that they come from Guinée each time they are called, returning when they have, in the native idiom, "descended from the heads of their horses" — that is, when the possession of their devotees has ceased. Those "under the water," however, being Haitians, remain in Haiti for seven years until the ceremony just mentioned, of putting them *nan canarie*, has been performed, when they, like the other *los*, return to Guinée. At the same time, all recognize the African character of the *los*, whether they be gods brought from Africa or the Créole *los* from Haiti itself.

Worship of the *los* is directed by priests of the cult. The terms *papaloi* and *mamalo* as designations for male and female priests, almost universally employed by non-Haitian writers, are practically unknown in Mirebalais, where, as in most regions of Haiti, a priest is called a *hungan*, a priestess a *mambu*.⁷⁹³ Besides the *hungan* (or *mambu*), and the *gangan*,⁷⁹⁴ a term applied to a *hungan* of renown, is the *bocor*, a practitioner of magic, not a member of any *vodun* priesthood, but a man who has acquired his power by the purchase of spirits. He is particularly differentiated from the *hungan* and *mambu* by the fact that the *los* of their own accord are believed to have given "*connaissance*" — the knowledge of healing and helping, to these latter.⁷⁹⁵ Not all gods can endow their devotees with this *connaissance*. Some of the Rada deities, in addition to those of the Ogun group who give it, are Legba, Damballa, Aizan, Bosu, St. Jean, and Agwe Woyo; among the Pétro gods it is conferred by Bosu Trois Cornes, Simbi d'leau, Gede, Orange, Malt' Gran' Bois, and Malt' Calfou (Carrefour). Simbi en Deux Eaux and Simbi Proméné both give magic power, the former conferring knowledge of excellent protectives against

739 from its ill effects after the evil has been exorcised, must also
789 know the forces they are combating if they are to achieve any
791 measure of success. By the same token, practitioners of black
793 magic must know what steps may be taken to counteract their
754 *wangas* so that, if necessary, they can in turn call forth super-
756 natural emissaries to strengthen the evil impulses originally
set in motion. In this sense, therefore, the *hungan*, the *gan-
gan*, the *bocor*, and the *caplata* employ essentially the same
techniques and operate with the same forces, the difference be-
tween them being one of degree rather than of kind. "Hun-
gan, c'est magasin. Gagné un pile marchandise — The hun-
gan is like a shop. He has a lot of merchandise," says the
Haitian, quoting a well-known proverb as he makes the point.

[538] In the main, it can be said that though the *hungan* and the
gangan practice magic, their main preoccupation is with the
loa — the maladies they send to affect a man and his posses-
sions — while the *bocor* is concerned almost exclusively with
setting in motion the agents that actuate black magic, and the
789 *caplata* dabbles in anything that is wanted. One important
796 means whereby the sorcerer obtains his powers is the evil *loa*,
791 but there is this essential difference between them: the gods
793 of the *hungan* are family gods who come to him through the
794 natural course of inheritance, endowing him with the *connais-
sance* that gives him his control over the supernatural world,
421 while the *bocor* buys his gods. And when a god is bought, it
425 is always acquired so as to enhance the position of its owner at
all costs, despite the knowledge that the power thus purchased
is dearly bought, bringing its own eventual punishment.
Sometimes an ambitious *hungan* adds to his familial *loa* other
"purchased" gods, but this is resented by the deities who have
given him his powers, so that in time these benevolent powers
take all means to humble and crush him. Furthermore, gods
acquired in this way pass on to unwilling members of their
owner's family and, after a generation or two of mischief-
making, must be "restrained" or "banished." A number of

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points — or oblique designations — makes clear the distinction between the two, for the *bocor* invariably and certain *hungans* on occasion are called *nèg' mazi maza*, "Negro who wears his back to the front," or, again, those who "serve with both hands." Though by no means shunning the services of the practitioner, the Haitians of Mirebalais nevertheless look upon the working of magic with a cynicism that is reflected in the gossip about happenings that befall all who practice it, in any form, and particularly those who work evil magic. It is said: "The *hungan* often dies an evil death, and the *bocor* who makes *wanga* almost always. These people kill each other by magic"; or one hears of a woman who one day went to the cemetery to obtain materials needed for her unsavory work and was struck and killed by the thunderbolts which are believed to smite sorcerers.

To keep his reputation, a practitioner of magic, good or evil, must make continual demonstration of his powers. For example, in prescribing a magical cure, it is incumbent upon the *hungan* or *mambu* to foresee all eventualities, even where the directions are not followed, a prescription which is regarded as a strong check on the charlatan and is the reason why a practitioner is prudent in refusing to accept a case beyond his power to aid, since persistent failure to achieve cures will lose a *hungan* his reputation and his practice. Naturally, certain practitioners do not fail on occasion to turn the anxiety of a family over a serious illness to their own account, but inasmuch as the cures made by a man are the most adequate proof of his power, the feeling is that his clients have an unquestioned safeguard against chicanery. This point of view, it may be noted, is of undoubted importance in perpetuating a living faith in magic.

An example of how rapidly a practitioner of magic can lose prestige when some mishap occurs to him was encountered when an important *gangan* of the valley was brought into court charged with the theft of a pig which he claimed was

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about to eat such food, for he feels a shudder pass through his body, and his arm becomes heavy, as was the case with a woman who three times dropped a piece of "beef" she was about to place in her mouth, before she realized the warning.

It can readily be seen how varied are the manifestations of evil magic. What are the forces behind them? What gives them power? What makes their unsavory ends possible of attainment? Their power comes from God, for, according to belief, everything comes from God, in the sense that God made the world as it exists. Therefore all beings are free to do anything they can contrive to do, though once dead they are called to account for their deeds. "Good and evil are two brothers; life and death are two brothers. All four come from God. They do not come from the *loa*."

But more immediately this power comes in great measure from the dead. Before a *bocor* makes a *wanga*, he asks permission of God, the Devil, Mait' Carrefour, Mait' Cimitière, Mait' Gran Bra, and Mait' d'l'Eau. Baron Samedi, perhaps the most important figure among those who aid in working black magic, lives in the cemetery. Though he is a *loa* and may possess those who appeal to him to work evil, this role is subordinate to his role as the power behind magic that kills. He controls the souls of those whose end has come as a result of magic, and when he is called at midnight, the sound of the clanking of chains is heard as he comes. He is envisaged as a dwarf. After his approval has been purchased for a projected deed, appeal is then made to Gede, for especially where it is a question of killing, though everything may have been made ready with Baron, Gede must "dig the grave." Herein lies the importance of Gede, for he is the court of last resort, the final power in matters of death.

Gede, however, is just, and even though Baron has marked a victim, Gede can refuse to concur in his decision. "If you do not merit death, Gede will refuse it," say the Haitians. It therefore sometimes comes about that though all preparations have

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789 all aspects of the natural and supernatural. But the reputable cult priest
 791 does not dabble in "black" magic—the kind that maims or destroys hu-
 793 man beings. One who does so is said to "work with two hands": one for
 754 the loa and one for evil. (The expression *servi dé main*—"serving with
 two hands"—is also applied to a cult chief who deals with deities of more
 than one "nation.") Many a cult priest in making his ritual flour drawings
 on the earth holds his left hand behind his back and draws with his right,
 giving testimony that he "works with one hand" only.

793 Each cult priest maintains his own cult temple, or *hounfor*. There are
 794 no cult officials above him, as there is no formal religious organization
 [346] beyond the hounfor itself. Within his own special community he is there-
 fore the chief religious functionary, the apex of an intratemple social or-
 ganization. Under the cult priest, ordinarily, there are two grades of
 assistants, and below them two classes of servitors.

793 The cult priest is usually referred to as a *houngan*, a Fon (Dahomean)
 789 title signifying "spirit chief." Sometimes he is called *gangan* (a Bantu
 171 word meaning "conjurer" or "doctor")² or *capla*. He also is known by
 791 the title *bocó* or *bocor*, which seems to be derived from *bocono*, the diviner
 or priest of the Dahomean Fa cult.³ The bocor is, in fact, sometimes re-
 ferred to as a *divineur*, and he is regarded by some Haitians as a clair-
 voyant and a practitioner of magic. As in Dahomey, the bocor in Haiti
 foretells fate through the throwing of shells or chips, much in the manner
 of the secular game *mayamba*. He also reads destiny with small sticks or
 ashes. In earlier days the cult priest was sometimes known by the Yoruba
 name *babalao*, a title which has been corrupted to *papaloi*. A female cult
 leader is known as a *mambo*. She is presumed to have, in a general way,
 [562] the same powers as the houngan, though in some quarters her *connais-
 sance*, or "understanding," is not regarded so highly, and her status is
 believed to be somewhat lower.

794 Directly under the houngan is his chief assistant, the *laplace*, and per-
 haps a little below him on the ladder, the *mambo caille*. The laplace is
 regarded as the vice-houngan, and he assumes responsibility for running
 the hounfor in the absence of his chief. The mambo caille, a woman, runs
 the cult center in the absence of both the houngan and the laplace. One
 step farther down the ladder is the *houngénicon*, who acts as a sort of
 chief of the main body of devotees. These high-ranking assistants to the
 houngan are sometimes called *badjicans*, or keepers of the altar.

[171] The servitors of the cult are known as *hounsi*, or "spirit wives," a name
 that was given to certain categories of cult servants in Dahomey.⁴ There
 are two main groups of hounsi: *kanzo* (those who have passed through a
 ritual fire test) and *bossale* (those whose loa are wild or untamed). The
² [Footnote appears on p. 349, Category 116. -- Analyst]
³ [Gorer, *Africa Dances*, p. 129; HERSKOVITS, *Dahomey*,
 II, 208 ff. Cf. p. 349, Category 116. -- Analyst]
⁴ [Footnote appears on p. 349, Category 116. -- Analyst]

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793 approval of the candidate's elevation is needed. He is also regarded as
 [769] being on more intimate terms with the family ancestors who, likewise,
 [783] must be in accord with the proceedings. The candidate for the asson is
 confined within the hounfor for a number of days, during which he takes
 purification baths and participates in other rituals. The rites that take
 place during this period are prescribed by the elder priest who has as-
 sumed responsibility. When the purification is ended, the candidate
 emerges into the *peristyle* (roofed court) to participate in the general serv-
 ice, and to undergo further tests.

Present during the ceremonies are all the principal hougans of the
 region—men who will be friendly associates of the new priest or, pos-
 sibly, unfriendly competitors. The candidate is tested on his knowledge
 [787] of how to use the asson and the tiny hand bell, and in the course of the
 [782] service he is mounted by the loa who is the chief protector of the cult tem-
 [794] ple. Animals are sacrificed, and all the loa sacred to the hounfor are in-
 [533] voked and asked for their approval and support. But it is not only the loa
 and the dead who must indicate their approval. The elder houngan polls
 the hounsî kanzo on whether they will accept their new cult chief and fol-
 low him. He also asks the chief drummer, who polls his assistant drum-
 mers. It is taken for granted that the decision is in the hands of the hounsî.
 The consensus is known before the actual service, but the formality of
 asking the question is observed. Should the hounsî refuse to accept the
 candidate for the asson, the elevation cannot take place.

793 The city and the countryside contain many self-styled hougans and
 554 bocors who are not recognized as bona fide by the community, regardless
 621 of the route by which they claim to have achieved their station. Sometimes
 [791] they are regarded as *pas fort* (not strong); that is, they do not have pro-
 found knowledge and understanding. The Haitian is quick to detect the
 difference between a houngan who knows and one who does not know.
 Many are stated to be outright fakes. One man who attempted to hold
 a service in Port-au-Prince aroused such contempt and disgust that a num-
 ber of persons who had been drawn by genuine interest walked out with
 remarks that the man should be punished. In fact, his failure to show any
 [533] essential qualifications for the houngan's role was commented upon in
 a song of ridicule that made its appearance at a secular dance that same
 night. The song noted some of the humorous aspects of the service, such
 as when the "impostor" struck himself vigorously on the head with the
 flat of a machete to show his "strength" and virtually incapacitated him-
 self for the rest of the evening.

346 It is easily observed that no two hounfors are exactly alike. They differ

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house. A round, polished Indian stone is occasionally used as a *garde* 789
habitation. And old people speak of a very powerful charm known
 as a *gros arrête* which in former times was placed on the trail to protect
 entire villages or valleys.

Still another potent defensive charm is the *pouin*, which is the 789
 product of ritual magic within the cult temple. A pouin may be an 794
 actual bundle containing a formula of special ingredients; more often, 796
 it is invisible, consisting of magical forces unleashed into space by
 the houngan. There are many ceremonies in the hounfor devoted to
 the projecting of these magical forces. They are called *cérémonie pouin*
 or *cérémonie magie* and are dramatized by special cult songs and dances.
 Sometimes the magic ceremony is woven into a more generalized cult
 ritual. The powers of the pouin are regarded as wider and more potent
 than those of the *arrête*. Pouins are said to protect an individual or a
 group not only against other magic but also against natural phenomena
 and accident. A pouin may ward off lightning, for example, or protect
 one from falling trees or from shipwreck or drowning. But it is not
 solely defensive magic. It may bring success in fishing, or produce a good
 crop in one's garden, or aid human fertility.

Since the crops and the garden are the substance of life, much atten-
 tion is given to their protection. An enemy may attack a man or his
 household through garden magic. He may bury a ouanga in the earth,
 to bring sickness or ruin. He may poison a tree by performing a special
 rite at its foot, and its fruits will then carry disease or death to the
 one who eats them. Or he may make a compact with the earth so that
 it will dry up and refuse to produce for the one who tills it. Against
 all these malevolent possibilities, as well as against common thieves,
 the Haitian peasant has many magical and practical resources. Some [777]
 people are said to employ zombies as watchmen. These fearsome [742]
 creatures will capture a trespasser and hold him for the owner of the 789
 field.³ Or perhaps the owner will place special *arrêtes* in his garden. 685
 Occasionally a man will protect his fields by planting *piquettes* in the [754]
 earth. The *piquette* is a piece of sharpened bamboo or hard wood. Its
 point is dipped into poison, and it is placed in the ground, sharpened
 end up. An unwary intruder who steps on a *piquette* may die of his
 wound. [775]

To counteract the *maljo*, or evil eye, a man may procure from a bocor 754
 a special shirt made of wide strips of red, white, and blue cloth sewed 789
 together. This shirt, called a *moyo* or *manyo*, is worn for seven days if 791
 the *maljo* is a rather ordinary one. If the evil force is a particularly
 virulent one, however, the *moyo* will be worn as long as twenty-one

³ [Simpson, "Haitian Peasant Economy,"
Journal of Negro History, October, 1940,
 p. 503. Cf. p. 351, category 116. -- Analyst]

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789 days, according to the bocor's prescription. It is also employed to protect an individual against various forms of the ouanga.

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759 Against poisons, the usual protection is the *drogue*, prepared by a bocor or a leaf doctor who specializes in such things. After having drunk a *drogue*, a man is regarded as immune to poison. Should a man be a "horse" of the loa Ogoun Balindjo, however, no *drogue* is necessary, for Balindjo's people are regarded as immune even without such precautions.

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791 Foretelling the future and divination take two general forms. In one variety, a bocor or *divineur*, using ritual paraphernalia such as cards, flour, or ashes, takes personal responsibility for the divination. In the other form, the *divineur* functions only when possessed by a loa, and it is the deity himself who foretells and foresees. An account of this kind of divination is given in chapter 6. "Horses" of the loa Mait' David when possessed are given packs of cards, for they are reputed to be able to divine the future.

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793 Certain houngans use the instrument known as the *gembo* as a divining device. This is a small shell about the size of a lemon, through which a long cord is passed. When there is no tension on the cord, the shell can easily be slid back and forth. When the cord is taut, the shell will not slide. The houngan holds one end of the cord under his foot, the other end with his hand above it. He starts his divination with the shell at the top and the cord taut. Shaking his asson with the other hand, he talks *langage* and asks questions. To indicate a "yes" answer he relaxes the tension on the cord and the shell slips downward an inch or so. The typical *gembo* is decorated with beads, old coins, religious medals, snake bones, and a fragment of mirror.

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787 There are several ceremonies for locating a thief or other guilty person. One is called *passage d'alliance*. A ring suspended on a string is held over a person's head. If it moves in a regular pendulous way, the person is innocent; but if it swings in a circle, his guilt is established. Another method is the use of a long stick. The stick is pointed at one man, then another, and when the end vibrates in a circular manner the guilty party has been located. This technique is known as *jugement de baguette*. A third method is the one known as *passé balai*. A man sits in a low chair and small branches and leaves of the *balai* (broom) tree are placed under the chair and fastened to its uprights. A guilty person sitting in this chair will cause the *balai* branches to vibrate and close in on him.

759 The role of the *docteur fe*—the leaf doctor—straddles the field of magic and pharmacology. Many of his potions are of a mystical and

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When they are not working, it is said, zombies are tied with special ropes made from the leaves of the banana tree. One popular song goes:

Nans Léogane
Yo marré zombie nans paille fig-bananel
Abobo wye-oh!

In Léogane
They tie the zombie with banana straw!
That is all, wye-oh!

Some Haitians tell you they know there are zombies because they have seen them. Not too many years ago a visiting writer stoutly declared that she, too, knew there were zombies because she had seen one—in the mental hospital at Pont Beudet. Although her reasoning was not quite airtight, the possibility that mental defectives are sometimes mistaken for zombies is worth considering.

Houngans who "work with two hands" are reputed to be able to gain permanent control over persons by means of a formula known as *lwe-lèvé* (kill and raise). Either for himself or a client, the houngan gains power over the victim by "killing" him through special magic and then "removing the soul" (*retiré n'dme*). The victim, presumed to be normally dead, is buried by his family; the houngan then retrieves the body and "restores the soul" (*metté n'dme*). With his soul restored, the victim has, in effect, become a slave of the houngan, who can do with him as he wishes. He differs from a zombie in that he has a soul, whereas the zombie has none.

Some Haitians believe that even one who has died a nonmagic death may be raised from the dead. To accomplish this, the houngan or bocor stands over the body, goes through a specified ritual, and calls out the dead person's name: "Albert Moreaul Albert Moreaul Albert Moreaul Lèvé non! Lèvé non! Lèvé non!" ("Get up! Get up! Get up!") Then, it is said, the dead man may awaken.

It is believed that a houngan may also command the souls of dead persons to perform services for him against an enemy. The souls at his disposal for this work are those which he keeps in earthen jars in his hounfor. Should he wish to plague an enemy, he will send one of these souls to the man's house to make him sick, or lazy, or insane. Usually, the man does not know what is happening to him; but if he becomes aware that a dead soul is working on him, he attempts to find out which houngan has sent it. Perhaps the houngan can be bought off. If not, another houngan may provide relief.

While some believe in the reality of the various demons and specters,

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Worship of the loa is directed by priests and priestesses. They grow into their positions by a kind of tolerant apprenticeship. Young men and women discover their abilities in dealing with loa or their desire to participate actively in serving them; they assist the officiating priests; they listen carefully to the lore of their elders, keeping their eyes open meanwhile. The priest is generally called a houngan, or sometimes a *papaloi*; the priestess a *mambu* or a *mamaloï*.¹³ No ceremony marks the progression of a novice through any set stages to final priesthood; rather, the people in the community simply recognize growing expertness. The more effective and capable a houngan, the greater his prestige and the wider his reputation. There is nothing even vaguely resembling the ordered hierarchy of priests in the Catholic Church, nor is there any control of one houngan over another. No holy robes adorn the officiants, although they occasionally wear certain colors or ornaments to please the loa. Most of the Vodun priests and priestesses are simple peasants, working in the fields and going about the daily round of life. When they are called to perform a ritual, an offering is taken up in the early part of the service to recompense them for their offices.

Actually, the Vodun houngan and mambu correspond much more closely to the primitive medicine man or shaman than to the Catholic priest. They are thought to have power, through certain Rada and Pétro loa, to cure illnesses caused either by adverse magic of one's enemies or by a loa; they are not able, however, to cure sickness sent by the Christian God. Likewise they can remedy or avert misfortune whose origin is magic or the loa. One of their highly important functions is foretelling the future: no important service would be contemplated by a family without previous resort to divination to determine the propitiousness of the time, nor would it be sensible to undertake a secular business of importance without preliminary reassurance by this means. To see into the future effectively, the priest must be possessed by the loa.¹⁴

13. The second of these names in each case derives from "papa" and "mama," or master and mistress; and from the familiar loa or god. It is not implied that the officiant dominates the loa but only that they deal expertly with them.

14. In addition to the houngans and mambu, there are also *loans* who specialize in magic without conducting regular religious rites. These *loans* probably deserve the name of *loans*.

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THE HAITIAN PEOPLE

4. Magic

771 It is difficult enough to make a distinction between religion and superstition; it is practically impossible, in dealing with a people who in their closeness to nature are not accustomed to the refinements of "civilized" thinking, to make one between magic and certain aspects of religion. Underlying both is belief in the supernatural; characteristic of both is a faith which recognizes a higher order of cause and effect operating with the lower one familiar in commonplace matters. Anthropologists hold various theories about magic, some saying that it is the set of practices out of which religion evolved, others that it exists for personal and practical ends and has little to do with religion; still others that it is a development out of religion, paralleling and complementing it.³⁵

771 One element which distinguishes religious practice from magic is the attitude toward spirits. In religion, the worshiper pays homage and humbly petitions, preserving meanwhile an attitude of humility
781 and to spirits or gods who must be propitiated; in magic, the human
782 being, by coercive words and actions, commands the services of spirits who (if the magical rites have been properly performed) must obey. The distinction is not between good and evil, for a god may have both characteristics and be entirely capable of working harm to mortals. As already noted, in the Haitian system the gods are like men in being mixtures of both principles.

771 Another difference between religion and magic concerns time.
789 Religion is social, open to all worshipers or at least to all of a group or social rank. Its rites are continually and repeatedly performed.
796 Magic, on the contrary, though sometimes public and social, is generally private and, since it is for a specific purpose, is performed only when the need arises. A man who was thoroughly conversant with magic might go through his whole life without ever feeling the need of employing it or having to exert himself to fend it off. One turns to magic as a sophisticated man might turn to medicine. Either may be done without; both may be used to excess.

787 In Haitian Vodun, magic interweaves itself with the general faith.

35. See, for example, Ruth Benedict, "Magic," in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, X, 39-44; A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization* (New York, 1922), chaps. X-XI; J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (London, 1907-15), *passim*; R. R. Marrett, *The Threshold of Religion* (New York, 1924), *passim*; and Sumner and Keller, *op. cit.*, II, chaps. XXX-XXXI.

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Everyone believes in it, though few would make nice distinctions between the two. Starting with extremes, the houngan conducting a service with sacrifice is officiating at a purely religious rite, while the bocor (sorcerer) concocting a love charm is dealing wholly in magic. It is perfectly proper, however, for a respectable houngan to brew a mixture, calling on the loa meanwhile for assistance, to cure a sick person: is this magic? Certainly it is private, specific, practical. A respectable houngan will not permit himself to dabble in evil magic, destined to bring misfortune to someone else;¹⁴ but such work is the stock in trade of the bocor, who knows the dangers of his profession yet is willing to run the risk for the sake of high profit. Between the reputable houngan and the awesome bocor may sometimes be found the *caplate*, a sort of jack-of-all-trades, who professes to be able to achieve whatever is demanded of him in magic, whether beneficial or harmful, but whose reputation is not high enough to make men trust him with important magical enterprises.

There exists one continual check to save the gullible from charlatanism on the part of the practitioner: the performer of any kind of magic must make frequent exhibitions of his powers. If the specialist cannot make his magic work, he soon loses his reputation. The career of magic is not one to be entered lightly. Constant search for medicinal plants, constant experimentation, comparison of practice—the requirements of the profession are as strenuous as those for the successful American doctor. Magic is like a live wire: it cannot be handled with impunity. The slightest slip on the part of the bocor might loose divine wrath on the bungler and quack. It is said that almost every bocor dies an evil death, hoist on his own petard. For the houngan the risk is not so great, since in general he relies upon the might of his own special loa, who of old has been familiar with him. True, he may run the risk of purchasing the services of other loa, but it is a risk, since his family loa, quick to feel insult, might punish him.

Magic runs the gamut from passive to active, simple to complex. The commonest manifestation of magic in Haitian daily life is one familiar to most peoples in the world—the charm. As in Italy and other southern European countries, the Haitian peasant believes in the evil eye. "Maldioque," it is called—a term not far removed from the Italian "*mal occhio*." The common belief is that certain persons,

14. This is commonly called "black" magic.

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